

MANAGING HOLIDAY STRESS

Happy Holidays!!---or is it? While the holidays can be a time of good cheer and celebrations with family and friends, it can also be a time when we feel the most pressure and stress trying to balance the demands of work, family obligations, holiday shopping, and finances. Preparing for the holidays doesn't only mean decorations, baking, and gift shopping. We need to prepare ourselves also.

The State of Michigan Employee Service Program (ESP) offers a unique tool to help manage stress before, during, and after the holidays. The Online Stress Management Program is confidential, anonymous, free, and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is comprised of seven modules that can be used individually or in combination to provide you with a personalized stress management plan.

The modules are: 1) Understanding Stress, 2) Stress Management at Work, 3) Type A and B Behavior Patterns, 4) Relaxation Training, 5) Thinking Differently, 6) Communication and Stress, and 7) Time Management. Each exercise and test can be printed out for your reference. Visit the ESP Web site, www.michigan.gov/esp, and click on "Online Stress Management Program."

Please note that while the Stress Management Program is a very effective and helpful resource, it is not intended to be a substitute for professional counseling or medical services. ESP professional counselors are available for confidential free assistance to state employees and family members. Call 517-373-7630 (or 1-800-521-1377), Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00p.m. for more information.